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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 008462

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [FR](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: COUNCIL OF EUROPE ON ALLEGATIONS OF SECRET
DETENTION CENTERS AND RENDITIONS

REF: A. STATE 221655

[1](#)B. PARIS 8313

[1](#)C. STATE 219905

[1](#)D. STATE 220071

[1](#)E. PARIS 7785

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Council of Europe Secretary General Davis warned the Ambassador December 12, citing NATO "unresponsiveness" to repeated written queries, that he intended soon "to go public" with respect to the alleged use of KFOR-run detention centers in Kosovo for secret CIA secret prisons (this despite the fact that French NATO officers present at the scene have categorically rejected the allegations). On renditions, Davis took a more discreet approach, saying that this was an issue the CoE's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), not its SYG, was addressing; he added that in fact this was a matter between the CoE and individual member states rather than between the CoE and the U.S. PACE President Rene van der Linden and investigator Dick Marty have taken a confrontational approach in advance of a January 23-27 plenary session, publicly stirring the pot in member states by provocatively accusing the U.S. of withholding information. End summary.

Kosovo:Access to Alleged secret detention center

[1](#)2. (C) During a December 12 meeting with the Ambassador, Council of Europe (CoE) Secretary General Terry Davis complained of what he described as continued NATO unresponsiveness to CoE requests for access to KFOR-run detention centers in Kosovo. He claimed he had sent seven separate letters to NATO SYG de Hoop Scheffer, none of which had elicited a satisfactory response. Davis described Kosovo as a "black hole" for the CoE Committee on the Prevention of Torture, notwithstanding the fact that the CoE charter gives the organization the right to visit any detention place in member states. Given NATO's obstructionism, Davis told the Ambassador -- "as a courtesy," he said -- that he would have no/no choice but to "go public" over the issue in early 2006.

[1](#)3. (C) Davis concluded that others, but not he, had begun to "connect the dots" and were speculating that Kosovo might be a site for secret CIA prisons free from international scrutiny. We note that on November 26, Le Monde carried an article in which the CoE's Human Rights Commissioner, Alvaro Gil-Robles, is reported as claiming that a September 2002 visit to Camp Bondsteel had given him the impression that it may have served as a detainee camp. This story was rebutted the following day in Le Figaro and Le Monde by the French general who was in charge of KFOR at the time, who stated that all interrogations of suspects at Bondsteel had been conducted in the presence of NATO -- that is to say, French -- officers.

Renditions

[1](#)4. (C) On the renditions issue more broadly, Davis noted that PACE President van der Linden and investigator Marty, rather than he, were addressing the matter for the CoE. He assured the Ambassador that he personally viewed the question as one between the CoE and its member states, not between the CoE and the U.S. Davis noted that the CoE had asked European member state governments, in light of allegations of secret prisons, whether they were in any way involved.

[1](#)5. (C) Van der Linden and Dick Marty, for their part, continue to seek to keep the issue alive. Marty declared to the press December 13 that he found the allegations of U.S. renditions credible, even if he allowed that it was still too early "to assert that there had been any involvement or complicity of (CoE) member states in illegal actions." He publicly chastised the U.S. for failing to provide any "information or explanations," putting aside any mention of the Secretary's December 5 statement on the controversy (ref c), which was provided to Marty under a cover letter from Ambassador Stapleton on December 7.

Comment

16. (C) For any number of reasons, including some that may have more to do with institutional rivalries rather than the issue at hand, van der Linden and Marty appear to have decided to take a much more confrontational, public approach than Davis on the renditions issue. The result is that, whatever their motivations, the renditions issue appears likely to stay on the front burner. The PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights announced December 13 that it will ask the PACE to schedule debate on the issue at the January 23-27 plenary session. End Comment.

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Stapleton